automatic route, in the textile sector with certain exceptions.

(x) To prepare and sensitise our textile and garment industry to conform to the ecological requirements of improving countries by providing facilities by way of eco-testing laboratories.

(xi) The National Textile Policy—2000 (NTxP-2000) has been announced to provide the policy direction for orderly and sustained development and growth of the textile industry in a harmonious way and to give a thrust to textile exports.

(xii) DEPB rates for certain textile products have been rationalised.

(xiii) A programme has been announced to induct 50,000 shuttleless looms and to modernise 2.5 lakh powerlooms in the decentralised sector by 2004.

(xiv) The following relaxations under the Quota Policy have been recently announced.

— Large additional quantities are being opened for most of the categories under the FCFS / RGE systems of the Quota Policies with a view to providing quotas to the garment and textile exporters on a continuos basis.

— In order to reduce transaction costs and time of the exporters, EMD/BG amounts were reduced during 2001 for certain categories and the date for utilising quotas were extended. Further, the L/C condition under the FCFS system was also waived for all such categories which had quantities left over for the rest of the year.

Fall in silk exports

743. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that Indian Silk Exports are expected to fall short of the $430 million target in 2001-2002 fiscal year; and

(b) if so, the details of the reasons for such a fall?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) and (b) Against the target of US $ 430 million of silk goods exports for the year 2001-2002, silk goods amounting to

U.S. $ 252.37 million have been exported during April-October, 2001. Silk exports have shown a declining trend due mainly because of the recessionary trend in the international market. Full achievement of the target depends on the favourable trend in the international market.

Non payment of salary to workers of NTC mills in Maharashtra

744. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 20,000 workers of N.T.C. mills in Maharashtra have not received their salary and other benefits and if so, since when;

(b) what is the total amount involved; and

(c) what steps Government are going to take to safeguard the interest of the workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) and (b) The workers of NTC mills in Maharashtra have been paid wages up to January, 2002.

(c) Since NTC subsidiaries in Maharashtra generate about 1/4th of their wage/salary requirements through production activities, Government has been providing budgetary support to meet the shortfall in wages/salaries. Such provision is proposed to be continued during the 2-year implementation period of the rehabilitation schemes under approval of BIFR after which the units are expected to generate sufficient cash surpluses to meet such liabilities.

Closure of textile units in Punjab

745. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that hundreds of textile units have been closed down in Punjab during last five years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the proposal of Government to re-open the textile units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) During the last five years (*i.e.* from 1-1-1997 to 31-12-2001), nine cotton/man-made fibre textile mills (Non-SSI) have closed down in the State of Punjab.